

RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

HELPLINES

Benefit Enquiry Line

- 0800 1690310

A free helpline for people with disabilities that provides information, advice and help with form filling.

Carers Support East Kent

- 01304 364637

Information on benefit rates and help with form-filling.

Contact

- 0808 808 3555

A charity for families with disabled children – provide factsheets, information and advice on benefits.

WEBSITES

Benefits and Work

- www.benefitsandwork.co.uk

Downloadable step-by-step guide that can help with completing DLA forms.

Carers UK

- carersuk.org/DLA

Find out more about the UK Disability benefits, how to claim, factsheets and online forum.

Department for Work and Pensions

- www.dwp.gov.uk

Government information on all benefits.

Contact

- www.contact.org.uk

A charity for families with disabled children – provide factsheets, information and advice on benefits.

BENEFITS

Carer's Allowance

- 0800 7510297
- www.direct.gov.uk/carers

An allowance for the carer of a disabled person. To qualify the carer must be aged over 16 and spend at least 35 hours per week caring for the disabled person who is getting Disability Living Allowance (DLA). It is not available to people who are full-time students (studying 21 hours or more per week) or who earn over £123 per week (current rates, net, after costs such as childcare). Carer's Allowance is

not means-tested, it is taxable and counts as income for Tax Credits and Universal Credit.

If you are paid Carer's Allowance the person you care for cannot get the Severe Disability Premium included in the award of any pre Universal Credit means-tested benefit they receive.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

- 08457 123 456
- www.dwp.gov.uk

This is a non-means tested benefit for children under the age of 16 years with disabilities, to help with the extra costs of bringing up a disabled child. To claim for a child, they should be one or more of the following:

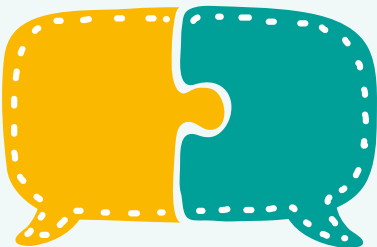
- aged 3 months or over and generally needs extra help or looking after
- aged 3 or over and has severe difficulty walking

- aged 5 years or over and needs extra help getting around out of doors

Just before your child reaches their 16th birthday you will be sent an application form to fill out to claim Personal Independent Payment (PIP).

There are two components to this allowance:

1. **Care component** which is payable at three rates depending on how much care is needed:
 - **High rate** – For extra help during the day and night.
 - **Middle rate** – For extra help during the day or night.
 - **Low rate** – For extra help during part of the day or part of the night.
2. **Mobility component** which is payable at two rates depending on how much help is needed.
 - **High rate** – for a child who is unable to walk or has severe difficulty in walking; children who are deaf and blind; those whose health might suffer from the exertion of walking; those claiming the highest rate care component who have severe mental impairment or severe behaviour problems. This rate is payable for children 3 years and over.
 - **Low rate** – for a child who can walk but may need someone to supervise or guide them. Rate payable for children 5 years and over.



You can also receive the following additional elements depending on which rate you receive.

Care component:

Low rate

- Child amount and disabled child addition (at the lower rate) on Universal Credit.
- Benefit cap exemption in Housing Benefit and Universal Credit
- Disabled child element/ disabled child rate on Child Tax Credit
- Disabled child premium on Housing Benefit

Middle or high rate:

- Carer's Allowance and Carer's Test on Universal Credit
- National Insurance Carer's Credit
- Carer's eligibility on Income Support

High rate:

In addition to the above section you can also claim:

- Enhanced Disability Premium child on Housing Benefit

Mobility component

Low rate:

- Same as low rate care component

High rate:

- Exemption from Vehicle Tax

- Eligibility for a Blue Badge
- Eligibility for the Mobility Car Scheme

Premiums for people on Income Support

If you are still receiving Income Support, you can apply for the Severe Disability Premium. Income Support is transferring to Universal Credit.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit paid to people of working age who are on a low income. You can claim it if you're looking for work, if you are unable to work through sickness or disability, if you are a lone parent, if you are caring for someone or if you are working and your wages are low.

Universal Credit is being introduced over several years and replaces the following benefits;

- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- income related employment and support allowances

- income based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Working Tax Credit

There is a carer amount included in your award if you have regular and substantial caring responsibilities for a severely disabled person. You do not need to have made a claim for Carer's Allowance to have the amount included in your award.

The benefit cap does not apply if you are receiving DLA or PIP for a child or young person you are responsible for.

Council Tax Reductions

Contact the council you pay your council tax to, to find out if you are entitled to a reduction.

There are 2 types of reductions you may be entitled to:

25% reduction – If you care for at least 35 hours per week for someone receiving the highest rate of the care

component of DLA, you may be classed as a 'disregarded person' and be entitled to a 25% reduction in council tax.

Reduction in band – If your home has been specifically adapted to meet the needs of a disabled resident who is substantially and permanently disabled, you may be entitled to a reduction in your council tax band. Adaptations that qualify are:

- a room (not kitchen or bathroom) mainly used by the disabled person or
- an extra kitchen or bathroom to meet their needs or
- enough floor space for a wheelchair used indoors.

NHS Low Income Scheme

- 0300 1230849
- www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/nhs-low-income-scheme-lis/

If you receive benefits on low income grounds you can fill out an HC1 form to see if you are eligible for free travel to hospital, free prescriptions, free dental care and free eye tests. There are 2 certificates available, HC2 (full entitlement) HC3 (partial entitlement).

National Key Scheme (Public Toilets)

- www.radarkey.org

National Scheme run by RADAR which gives access to specially adapted public toilets in most towns and cities. Keys are available from your local council offices, and are also available to buy online.

Relief from VAT

- 0845 010 9000

Some gadgets and equipment designed solely for people with disabilities are zero rated for VAT. These include

medical and surgical appliances, specialised articles such as special beds, lifts and hoists and installation costs of special equipment. Certain building work such as improving access to a building, adaptations to a bathroom and the installation of a lift are also exempt from VAT.

Water Meter Charges

If you have metered water, are on income related benefits (such as Income Support, Housing or Council Tax benefit or Tax Credits) and use more than average, you may be able to get your bill capped. You must also have either 3 or more children under 16, or you or your child has a flaky or weeping skin disease, incontinence, Crohn's or Ulcerative Colitis abdominal stoma or renal failure requiring dialysis at home. Contact the organisation who you pay your water bill to.

HELP WITH FUNDING

There are some organisations that provide financial support and grants for children with disabilities. Each organisation will have different criteria for funding. Have a look on their websites to see if you may qualify.

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

■ www.thebrightsideoflife.org.uk

To relieve the needs of children (under 18 year olds) by reason of finance, illness, or other disadvantage, by the provision of grants to improve their conditions of life.

Cauldwell Children

■ www.cauldwellchildren.com

Provides grants for special buggies and car seats, therapy trikes and multi-sensory equipment.

Family Fund

■ www.familyfund.org.uk

Provides grants to families who have a disabled or seriously ill child. Criteria applies, for more information visit their website.

My AFK

■ www.my-afk.org

Provides grants for equipment and mobility aids for children and young people with physical and mental disabilities.

Tree of Hope

■ www.treeofhope.org.uk

■ 01892 535525

Crowdfunding charity that helps children and young people with a disability or illness by supporting their families to raise the money they need to pay for specialist care that is not freely available through the UK healthcare system.



Check this information is up to date by visiting www.kent.gov.uk/localoffer – this website explains what the Local Offer is for families with children with special educational needs. As a printed document this handbook can go out of date so it is always best to check online.

